

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Tornik Inc

Connecticut State Technology Extension Program

Tornik Embraces Lean

Client Profile:

Tornik Inc., located in East Hartford, Connecticut, was established in 1992. The company is an electronics contract manufacturer that specializes in cable and harness assemblies, along with box builds and various electro-mechanical assemblies. Tornik currently employs 70 people.

Situation:

Tornik has been a client of the Connecticut State Technology Extension Program (CONNSTEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, since 2000. The relationship began with an ISO 9001:2000 certification and continued with Lean projects. Tornik's General Manager, Dan Rubbo, had a background in Lean Manufacturing and experienced the benefits of Lean and working with CONNSTEP in prior organizations. Rubbo decided to jump start Tornik's Lean culture by contracting CONNSTEP to facilitate an initial Lean event and to provide general Lean training.

Solution:

CONNSTEP identified a kaizen that would allow the Tornik team to achieve Lean rewards and would serve as a training tool for employees. The kaizen event was partially sponsored by the Northeast Utilities Process Re-engineering For Increased Manufacturing Efficiencies Program (NU PRIME). The kaizen focused on product flow from harness assembly to box assembly and the improvement of plant layout and floor space utilization. The main goal of the kaizen was to maintain on-time delivery performance while increasing flexibility. The Kaizen team found that total lead time on repeat orders averaged greater than four weeks and that the plant layout resulted in inefficient material and assembly flow. Inventory was being controlled by the MRP system and there were no visual controls. CONNSTEP guided the team through Lean awareness training, value stream mapping, Pull/Kanban systems, an overview on 5S and Cellular design.

Results:

- * Reduced lead-time by 15 percent.
- * Decreased utilized floor space by 40 percent.
- * Improved productivity by 15 percent.
- * Achieved a more competitive and profitable position.

Testimonial:

"CONNSTEP helped to train a cross functional group of employees and directed them through a variety of hands-on activities and projects that involved our processes. The goals of the team were to reduce manufacturing lead-time, reduce floor space utilized, and increase worker productivity. All the goals were met. CONNSTEP helped us to better compete."

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Dan Rubbo, General Manager